DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 125 929 SO 009 155

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TITLE	Rinnsal: Exercises in Location Analysis. Instructional Activities Series IA/S-6.
INSTITUTION	National Council for Geographic Education.
PUB DATE	75
NOTE	5p.; For related documents, see ED 096 235 and SO 009 140-167
AVAILABLE FROM	NCGE Central Office, 115 North Marion Street, Oak Park, Illinois 60301 ($0.50, secondary set $15.25)
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.83 Plus Postage. HC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	Case Studies; Developed Nations; Discussion (Teaching Technique); *Economic Development; Environmental Influences; *Geographic Location; *Geography Instruction; Land Use; Learning Activities; Locational Skills (Social Studies); Secondary Education; *Simulation; *Site Analysis; Social Studies; Teacher Developed Materials; Teaching Techniques

ABSTRACT

This activity is one of a series of 17 teacher-developed instructional activities for geography at the secondary-grade level described in SO 009 140. The activity investigates economic change in a developing region in the United States. "Rinnsal" is a geographical simulation game lasting three weeks that involves location analysis concepts. Specifically, students are involved in the process of deciding on plant location for industrial development. A steel company has decided to build a new integrated steel mill at one of five port cities on the Arkansas River. It contacts five industrial location-analyst companies. Each industrial location analyst prepares a written and oral report containing a discussion of reasons for locating the new steel plant in each of the five port cities. Additionally, the report specifies one of these cities as its locational choice and gives reasons for choosing the particular city. The report is submitted to the executive board of the steel company which studies the report and awards a contract to one of the five industrial location companies. Game roles consist of the executive board of the steel company, industrial location-analyst company, and planners. Students organize groups, do research, prepare and deliver reports, role-play awarding contracts, and discuss their decisions. A map of the Arkansas River Basin Project is provided. (DB)

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INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES SERIES IA/S-6

RINNSAL: EXERCISES IN LOCATION ANALYSIS

by

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This instructional activity illustrates how a locational analysis topic can be developed into a geographical simulation game. The setting is the Arkansas River at Tulsa-Catoosa, Muskogee, Fort Smith, Little Rock, and Pine Bluff.

SO 009 155

The Application of Rinnsal to Education

The problem of economic development is a persistent problem. Normally when students think about economic development they think about Africa, Latin America, and Asia. They seldom consider the aspect of economic development of regions in the United States.

One region in the U.S.A. that is currently experiencing economic development is the Arkansas River basin. The Arkansas River was recently made navigable from a point near Tulsa to the Arkansas-Mississippi river confluence. This new navigation system has already begun to attract new industry to this somewhat economically underdeveloped area.

What processes are involved in plant location? How can these be learned in an interesting fashion? It was decided to approach this latter question via the simulation game approach.

Rinnsal is a geographical simulation game that involves location analysis concepts. It is an attempt to teach industrial location factors via the simulation game method. This game would be particularly useful in an economic or U.S. geography course. It might also be employed in a regional geography course as it does represent a region. Obviously the game could be modified in many ways to make it more valuable for a given teacher's school situation.

Instructions to Students:

For the next three weeks you will be participating in a simulation game. The name of the game is Rinnsal- which is a German word meaning small waterway. Rinnsal involves the Arkansas River Project (Figure 1).

National Steel Company, Inc., has decided to build a new integrated steel mill at one of the following five port cities on the Arkansas River Project; Tulsa-Catoosa, Muskogee, Ft. Smith, Little Rock, or Pine Bluff. It contacts some industrial location analysis companies, and after some preliminary negotiation, it is decided that each industrial location analyst will prepare a preliminary, written and oral, report. The written report should contain a brief discussion of the oral advantages and disadvantages for locating the new steel plant in each of the five port cities. Additionally, it should specify one of these cities as its locational choice. The oral report of 10 minutes should concentrate on explaining why they chose the city they did. This report will then be submitted to the executive board of National Steel. After carefully studying all the preliminary reports submitted by the industrial location analyst companies, the executive board of National Steel will "award a contract" to one of the industrial location companies for the purpose of doing a final report. However, when the contract is awarded the game is over.

The industrial location companies are competing with one another to win the contract that is being offered by National Steel Company. There will be three to five participants in each industrial location analyst company. National Steel executive board will be represented by two - three participants.

Game Roles

Executive Board of National Steel Company (Two to three participants)

Chairman of the Board Board Members

In addition to awarding the contract, this board is responsible for directing the activites of the game. This includes making some rules and interpreting rules.

Industrial Location Analyst Company (Three to five participants per company)

Chief Planner and Associate Planners

These companies prepare a preliminary report for the purpose of winning a contract offered by National Steel Company. As the chief planner is ultimately responsible for the report, he should direct company activities. If someone fails to show up for meetings or fails to complete assigned work, the chief planner may "fire" such a person.

Game Rules

The procedure of the game can be best illustrated by the following outline.

Committee Organization, Step #1 (two class periods). There are two class meetings for introductory and organizational purposes. Additional outside class meetings are established as needed by the various groups. It is important that the chief planner writes down

the names and phone numbers of each participant.

Committee Research, Step #2 (nine class periods). Research is conducted.

Committee Reports, Step #3 (one class period). During class the chief planner with the aid of the planners presents his preliminary report (oral and written) to the executive board for National Steel Company.

Board Decision, Step #4 (one class period). During class the executive board of National Steel, Inc. awards the contract to one of the location analyst companies. A short explanation of why they chose the particular location company that they did will be presented.

Post game discussion, Step #5 (two class periods). The post game session analyzes the simulation decisions. There are two basic questions on these decisions: why were they taken, and what were their effects?

ARKANSAS RIVER PROJECT

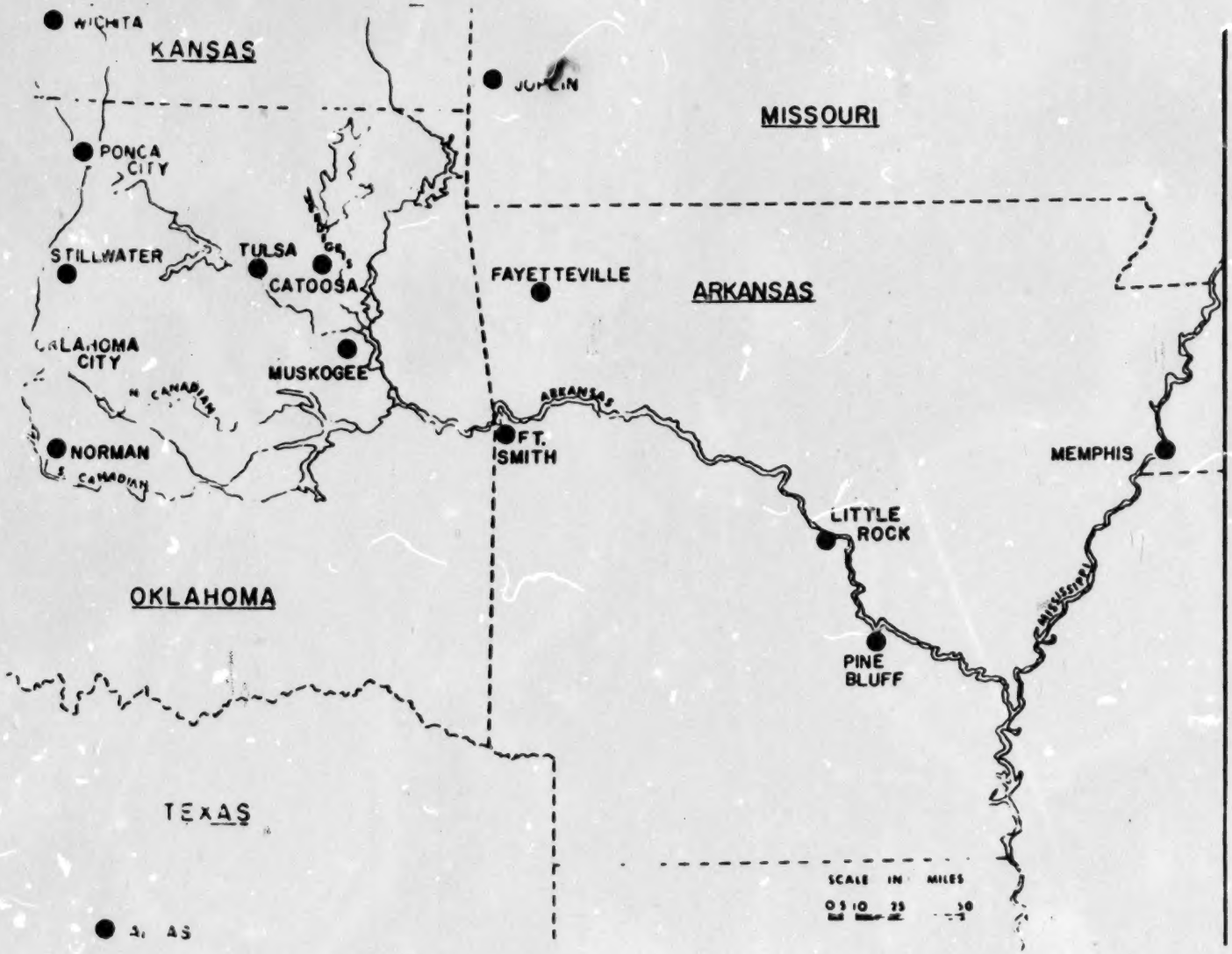

Figure 1